

California **GARDEN**

THE AMAZING SAN DIEGO DAHLIA STORY • SAN CLEMENTE CANYON PARK



SAN DIEGO COUNTY'S GARDEN MAGAZINE FOR 52 YEARS

35 cents
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1961
VOL. 52, NO. 4



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CALIFORNIA GARDEN

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1961

VOL. 52, NO. 4

Has San Diego forgotten that floral beauty is a cornerstone of its appeal to tourists? Ever since Cabrillo's day, people have been coming to Southern California to see for themselves the fabled beauty of its flowers. Yet in all of the high-powered, high-priced ads recently placed in major magazines by the Convention and Tourist Bureau there is nary a mention of the garden side of San Diego.

At fault is the Bureau's narrow concept of recreation. Isn't recreation more than the Border and Mission Bay? The gardener working in his back yard, the stroller in a park, the sitter-on-the-bench, the rockhound, the wildflower hunter, the bird watcher—all of these are engaging in their choice of recreation. Unfortunately for the purposes of publicity, these activities are almost universally unspectacular and silent, but they attract untold thousands of high caliber people, even heavy spenders, if you insist upon translating everything into dollars and cents. It is impossible to estimate how many people have settled in San Diego because it was a good place to grow their favorite flower, but the number is large.

The San Diego Rotary Club's anniversary project (see p. 30) should stimulate big thinking among projects committee chairmen of other clubs. One crying need throughout our park system is for plant labels. Just the sort of project a garden club (or group of clubs) is uniquely qualified to handle.

We had only a few requests for the name of the product mentioned in Nettie Trott's rose care column in the June-July issue, but the one she received made up for any lack on the local level. Hers came direct from Headquarters—of the American Rose Society, Columbus, Ohio.

Descanso Nurseries, Chino, California, ordered 500 reprints of Alice Miller's article "Are You Ready for Rhododendrons?" in the same issue.

Victoria Padilla's tribute to Hugh Evans, which you read in our February-March issue, was reprinted this summer in *Lasca Leaves*, quarterly

publication of the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum.

North Park merchants have gotten good mileage out of their empty-headed meter posts. First, enough publicity over removing the meters to fulfill a PR man's dream. Now, they've topped the posts with redwood planters. The rather unattractive design won't matter for long, since grape ivy will soon hide the containers. And the planters stop people from stuffing the posts full of trash.

Club members (garden or otherwise) can save money individually, or augment their club treasury, by ordering garden supplies in bulk. Many nurseries and mail order houses offer either cash discounts or a merchandise bonus for large orders. Similar savings are sometimes available on stationery, books, and magazine subscriptions. Yes, we'll talk terms. Just ask.

The instinct for self-preservation helps us to overlook the unsightly and troublesome aspects of our surroundings: all of our senses become less acute. This partial numbness enables us to endure, and even enjoy, city living. Every now and then, though, something cuts through to the nerve ends and makes us aware of the creeping horrors that surround us.

It happens in many ways: someone cuts down a tree, and three days later we miss something familiar on that corner where we turn left on the way home from work; a neighbor brightens up his place and we become aware of the faintly shabby tone of the whole block; we drive down Rose Canyon for the nth time, and suddenly the line of billboards gets through to that area behind the eyes—one more has been put up, and that's just enough to break through our shell of conditioning. We see the entrance to our city as a first-time tourist would. The verdict? Horrible. Actually, it is one of the painful duties of intelligence to remain alert, to see and hear, and recognize the need for corrective action. Why not start on your own block, your own street, your own section of town? Sort of a grass-roots movement of discontent.

George A. La Pointe

COVER—The dahlia First Lady (shown in actual size) is currently the world's champion prize winner. Developed and introduced in San Diego, it has been a leading winner since 1954. Three years ago it reached the top in the United States; a year later, at the Holland national show; and last year, at the Australian show.

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FUN MAIL

Whether it's fan or pan, it's fun to get mail.

Rhododendrons

Sir:

I want to congratulate you on the fine article on Rhododendrons in your June-July issue. The article is authentic and well prepared; I am surprised at the amount of material the Millers were able to obtain when there is really so little information available. They are to be congratulated.

My interest in Rhododendrons goes back many years to the time my father used to receive about a dozen plants each Easter as gifts . . . They were "forced" and mostly of one variety, Pink Pearl, but they were certainly beautiful and appreciated. He started the Rhododendron planting at Descanso Gardens with these gift plants.

Before the Descanso property was sold, my father started a collection of Rhododendrons by exchanging Camellias with Mr. Jock Brydon of Salem, Oregon. Mr. Brydon was to use his judgment as to varieties suited for our Southern California area.

The Rhododendrons were never planted at Descanso, but remained balled and burlapped for over two years until we brought them to Chino, where we placed them in containers for the first time. Fortunately the selection made by Mr. Brydon was excellent and it proved to be the nucleus of the collection of over 30 varieties that we grow today. Our annual production at Chino is approximately 20,000 plants. This is not a great quantity, but we feel it is sufficient to give us a pretty good background on growing the plants in our area.

The most notable discovery we made was at the suggestion of Nuccio Bros. They gave us six plants of the Hybrid Azaleadendron *Broughtonii Aureum* and said we should grow it because it was a sure-fire budder and had a pretty yellow truss of blooms. We now grow nearly 5000 plants a year of this variety and believe it will be sensational when we offer our first plants this next spring. Actually, the plant is ancient in the trade and overlooked in the Northwest because of its habit of shedding most of its foliage in their cold winters. Thus, the plant was never accepted into commercial channels in that area, and consequently is not available anywhere else. However, with our warm Southern California winters Broughtonii holds all of its foliage and blooms beautifully at about Mother's Day each year. This plant apparently was meant for Southern California and we are doing our best to make it available.

The culture you describe in your article is excellent. My only comment concerns feeding. One should be very cautious. Use a mild organic or a dilute liquid. Always have the growing medium wet at time fertilizer is applied.

All of our plants are on their own root, but as your article states, most of the plants available are grafted. This is unfortunate. A grafted plant, in the opinion of most growers today, is less desirable than an own root plant, for several reasons. The first, as you described, is suckering; the second is that the understock is not as strong nor is it as disease-resistant or hardy as the plant it supports. A cutting-grown plant is much more attractive with better

foliage and a bushier appearance.

I would also like to comment on stock that has been field-grown in our Northwest soils and then lifted and placed in a container for nursery sales or even sold balled and burlapped to nurseries for consumer sales. I do not believe that stock produced in this manner will perform in Southern California as well as the type of stock we grow. I say this because the ball of clay that surrounds the crown of the plant will become incompatible with the peat moss compost that has been packed around the clay either in the container or in the garden. Clay is fine for Oregon, Washington and Northern California where the pH is low and water is not saline. But in our area, the clay soon picks up and retains all of the salts in the water and salts that are added in the form of fertilizer. This is harmful to the plant. You also have a watering problem because the needs of clay are not similar to the needs of peat moss. Part of the root structure will be dry and another part wet.

We determined that the best system would be to grow Rhododendrons in compost from the time they are rooted cuttings until they are placed in large containers for resale. In this manner we believe we are overcoming one of the serious problems that has made the culture of Rhododendrons appear difficult.

ROBERT M. BODDY
Descanso Nurseries
Chino, California

Reaction

Sir:

The past year of CALIFORNIA GARDEN has been a tremendous pleasure and a source of vast information. The last issue was really welcomed when I found the documented article on Presidio Park plantings. Our Junior Garden Club is studying San Diego natives this year, and one of our field trips is to be Presidio Park (in August) to study the trees and shrubs. Yours truly (an Easterner) will have to identify them. Thank you and the contributors for such a grand job.

FRANCES S. PLUMB
San Diego

Dear George,

Yes, I like articles on parks and trees and outstanding home gardens. No, I do not want a monthly, for that would not give me time to absorb all the material in each issue. Mr. Jerabek's articles alone are a challenge! The San Diego Chamber of Commerce should hand out copies of Mrs. Clark's map [of Presidio Park, June-July.]

HELEN D. CARSWELL
Sepulveda, California

CALENDAR

August 5-6

San Diego County Dahlia Society annual Dahlia Show. Conference Building, Balboa Park.

September 13 & 27

Flower Arrangement Workshop; Mrs. Arthur J. Mitchell, instructor. Floral Building, Balboa Park, 10 a.m.

September 24

Flower Arrangement Class; Mrs. J. R. Kirkpatrick, instructor. Floral Building, 9:30 a.m.

Dahlias Top Flower Show Scene

SAN DIEGO'S colorful dahlia show the first weekend in August is one of more than 50 exhibitions throughout the country under the general auspices of the American Dahlia Society. The show here and one at Inglewood a week earlier are the nation's first. More than 3,000 blooms are expected to be on display in the Conference Building, Balboa Park, when the show opens Saturday, August 5.

Show hours are 2 to 8 p.m. the first day, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday, August 6. An admission of 50 cents is charged. Children and military personnel in uniform are admitted free.

The San Diego County Dahlia Society is staging the show. In addition to the American Dahlia Society, the local group is affiliated with the Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference of California.

There are 381 classes in the show, including A.D.S. and Conference competition for seedling awards. Among the 32 major awards to be made are medals from the eight other Conference societies, and from other local societies in other parts of the country. Highest award at the show will be the society's own silver medal, going to the best bloom. Society bronze medals are given for best blooms in the four sections.

A trophy offered for the second year is for the best bloom, any type, size, or color, grown and entered by an exhibitor 16 years old or younger.

Probably the most interesting section of the show, according to Society President Floyd McCracken, will be for novice growers who never have won more than five blue ribbons. This section each year is second only to the advanced amateurs, in which most of the society's members show their flowers.

In addition to local growers, the show annually attracts exhibitors from all over Southern California, and from as far away as Santa Cruz and Bakersfield.

All dahlia growers and arrangers are invited to take part in the show, President McCracken said. There is no charge for exhibiting.

Landscaping at College Grove

by Zelda Vernier

A VISIT to College Grove, for the gardener, is more than a shopping trip. Plants and flowers, all chosen for effective display with a minimum of care, are everywhere. Take a tour with me, and you may carry home an idea or two that will be useful in your own garden.

Along the full length of the Mall, olive trees, planted in attractive, raised boxes, provide shade for *Philodendron selloum* and dwarf begonias. Would you guess that huge trucks, rumbling below, are delivering merchandise to shops along the Mall?

At the end of the Mall, beyond the line of olives, are small planter boxes containing rubber trees, with Japanese grape (*Cissus rhombifolia*) and variegated dwarf coprosma planted around them. Here, too, is the Fountain of Faith, offering the soothing sound of falling water. Note the bronze plaque which tells you that all coins from the fountain will be given to the San Diego Society for Crippled Children.

Against the building at the south side of the Mall, tall Washingtonia palms and shorter podocarpus trees, with large *Philodendron selloum* between, make an effective "skyline." Familiar asparagus fern (*Asparagus sprengeri*), seldom used as a ground cover, forms a clean, fresh looking carpet.

Notice the willowy shrubs in boxes. They are Rock Willow (*Dodonaea viscosa*), which grow to 10-12 feet. According to Hoyt's *Ornamental Plants for Subtropical Regions*, it "adapts itself to all adverse circumstances of heat, alkali, wind or drought." This Southwestern native might be useful in more of our gardens, or at least along their outer edges.

Against another building, a striking planting is composed of groupings of Japanese viburnum and two species of Bird-of-Paradise, *Strelitzia reginae* and *S. nicolai*, set between tall palms. Masses of purple and white alyssum, interspersed with dwarf begonias, form a colorful ground cover.

The sound of falling water draws you toward the moving sidewalk which carries shoppers from the Mall

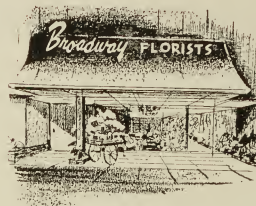
to the Concourse on the lower level. The descent takes you through a grotto planted with moisture-loving plants. On the right, water gushes over a rough rock wall and splashes noisily into a pool ten feet below. Australian and Hawaiian tree ferns flourish here, above aralias, golden bamboo, mondo grass and ivy. In the left grotto, an unusual "bush" ivy (about four feet tall), cocculus, a decorative, evergreen shrub, and several varieties of aralia have been used for height. Between large rocks, Agapanthus (Lily-of-the-Nile), mondo grass and baby tears provide attractive variety, and the gray of *Agave attenuata* makes a conspicuous contrast to the green of the other plants.

In the center of the Concourse, you will see a large area, perhaps 25'x40', where the two Birds-of-Paradise have been used again in conjunction with palms, dwarf palms this time, plus *Philodendron selloum* and cordyline, a plant new to me. English ivy and mondo grass cover the ground.

THE post office and the entrance to the auditorium are in a still-lower court. As you walk down the stairs, you may think that you have left landscaping behind. But glance at the tropicals under the stairway: dieffenbachia, *Philodendron monstera deliciosa*, cycads, evergreen Chinese anthuriums, and *Maranta kerchoveana*.

It took 65,000 plants to cover the bare hillsides surrounding the shopping center at College Grove. Home-owners with bank problems will find it useful to see what plants have been used successfully there. In addition, there are many, many trees whose growth habits you might be interested in studying. Among them are magnolia, camphor, Brazilian pepper, jacaranda, coral, sycamore, eucalyptus, acacia, and melaleuca. Should you have questions about any of the plantings, ask for Emil Lehman, the young Swiss who has charge of the gardens. He knows the name and cultural needs of every plant under his care.

If you have not yet been to College Grove, plan to spend a few hours there looking around. You will enjoy it.



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Visit to Arnold Arboretum

by Helen D. Carswell

AFTER YEARS of studying gardening, horticulture, famous gardens, and the people who make them possible, a trip across the country to see America in spring was almost inevitable. Starting from California and journeying as far as Cape Breton Island at the east end of the continent during May and June, I found the greatest pleasure, beauty, and opportunity for future study at the Arnold Arboretum in Massachusetts.

Known as "America's Greatest Garden," Arnold Arboretum at Jamaica Plain is about five miles from downtown Boston. Easily reached by car from U.S. 1, or by subway from the city, it is open to the public, without charge, every day of the year.

The gift of James Arnold, a merchant of New Bedford, Massachusetts, this "Museum of Living Plants" is administered by Harvard University in cooperation with Boston Department of Parks and Recreation. Its purpose is to grow every tree, shrub and woody plant able to withstand the climate of New England in the open ground. Since its establishment in 1872 the arboretum has introduced into cultivation in America over 4000 species and varieties of plants. The late Professor Charles S. Sargent, Director of the Arboretum, 1879-1927, outlined the functions of the institution as, first, the herbarium, second, the library, and third, the collections of living trees and shrubs.

Early May was an ideal time to see the metamorphosis after a long, stormy winter. Hillsides were turning green, fruit buds swelling and taking on color, bulbs were blooming in drifts under birch trees. This was one spring in a generation for the occasional tourist, since the season was about two weeks late and an unprecedented variety of things flowered at one time, in place of the usual succession of bloom.

On my first visit, the deciduous magnolias were a special treat. Because of plant quarantines, this type of magnolia was not generally available in California until the thirties; consequently, those seen in California are not very large. (The famous *Magnolia*

campbelli of Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, bloomed for the first time in 1940.) The magnolia planting, located around the Administration Building, gives the venerable gray stone building a gay and frivolous look for a few weeks in spring. Late April is usually the ideal time to see the greatest number of varieties at peak bloom.

Except for the magnolias, bulbs and some early azaleas, spring bloom was still a promise at the time of my first visit. Two weeks later when I returned, the entire garden looked like the color post cards on sale at the Administration Building. All rolled into one profusion of blossoms were cherry, peach, crabapple, dogwood, hawthorn, and lilacs. Best of all was the display of new leaves, a newness and perfection without blemish. Many of the crimson-leaved trees, such as red maples and beeches, made a show all by themselves.

ARNOLD Arboretum was planned and developed long before the days of color photography, but it has all the features that would make Mr. Eastman very happy: hills and valleys, meadows and woodlands, a small stream, reflecting ponds, paths with graceful curves enticing one on to the beauty just beyond the bend. My first picture was of *Malus sargentii rosea*, the pink crabapple. Looking at it later, I saw in it the essence of a New England spring; the whole trip was worth just this one shot! But what went wrong with the light meter? A resounding clap of thunder brought me down to earth; it was, of all things, RAINING!

Earlier in the day a trip to Cambridge to see the Ware Collection of Glass Flowers and the Longfellow Home had left a thought, or frame of mind, that proved consoling:

*Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.*

Without the rain, I would not have taken time to visit the library, for books will always be there. Why "burn up daylight" when there are New England blossoms to be seen? But to scurry for

shelter was a necessity, and the library was the place to find it.

The Arboretum's collection of more than 50,000 horticultural books is not a lending library, but is available for study and research. Since roses, my first love, come under "woody plants," I looked for them first. The 1961 *American Rose Annual*, issued since I left home, was displayed on a table, along with another recent publication, *Miniature Roses* by Roy Genders, Blandford Press, London. But why look at new books when I might never again have an opportunity to peruse ones so rare!

It has often been by dream that Saint Peter might say, "Come right in, Helen. We have a fine set of Redouté for you." Here right on earth was a set in front of me, mine to browse through, the only limitation being the time I could allow myself. The paintings by P. J. Redouté are included in *Les Roses* by the botanist Thory. They were commissioned by the Empress Josephine, wife of Napoleon, and show the roses in her garden, Malmaison, where roses were brought from every part of the globe in the early 19th century. To say the least, it is a rare and expensive book!

To name a few others that interested me, there were the two large volumes of *The Genus Rosa* by Ellen Willmott, *The Rose Garden* by William Paul, and an 1847 edition of *The Rose* by S. B. Parsons, probably one of the first important books on the rose written in America. These volumes were all marked with the name of the donor; for example the William Paul had a flyleaf signature "Francis Parkman, May 1959." The book plate read "Once Professor of Horticulture, Harvard, Received by the University 1/17/94, bequest."

The following day brought ideal weather. The only problem was to decide how to allot time; to take pictures, study plants, to stroll and perhaps talk with some of the other visitors. My camera had its day, and I am happy now to have these pictures to enjoy throughout the years.

As I entered, by the Forest Hills gate this time, the crabapple collection was to my left, to the right azaleas reflected in a pond, on a hill ahead the lilacs, and beyond a curve, natural woods ablaze with redbud, dogwood, maples, and all sorts of interesting shade plants.

The lilacs won! Strolling along, I sniffed, photographed, dreamed and played a game: If I could carry off just one bush, which would it be? After selecting "My" bush, photograph-

ing, smelling and admiring it, the only thing left was to identify it. Every bush has two good clear labels, showing both the common and the scientific name, the name of the originator, and the date planted. My selection was "Pocahontas," originated by Dr. F. L. Skinner of Dropmore, Manitoba, and planted 7/25/35. It must be a good grower to have reached such a size in just a quarter century, for lilacs are usually slow-growing, and take years to come into bloom. Whether or not it was a good selection I do not know. One look in spring could not tell the many other qualities needed for a good lilac.

LATER in the afternoon I was fortunate enough to have a tour of the gardens with Dr. Donald Wyman, horticulturist there since 1936, and at present the President of the American Horticultural Society. This tour gave me an over-all picture of the entire planting, including the 100-year-old hedges of unnamed lilacs in full bloom, the conifer collections, a lath house of bonsai, rhododendrons that would soon be in bloom, and a view from the garden's highest point. Here we could see the Blue Mountains to the south and Boston to the north, the Customs Building, the John Hancock Life Insurance building with its weather signal tower, and the golden dome of the State House.

Visiting Arnold Arboretum a few times in spring is like glancing at only a few pages of a large, interesting volume, for its charms are spread throughout the four seasons. Trees, shrubs and vines in endless variety continue to flower and give color during the entire summer. Later, to the glory of a New England autumn, additional shadings are added by the exotic plants from Europe and Asia. Even winter has a beauty of its own, when the form and tracery of deciduous plants are enhanced by a background of snow, and the barks and winter buds take on importance in the landscape. That is why Arnold Arboretum gives a feeling that one must return often and at different seasons.

It is well to remember every time we plant a regal lily, a flowering shrub, or a broad-leaved evergreen, that it probably was brought originally from the wilds of another continent, grown and tested for adaptation in America, and introduced to our gardens by the Arnold Arboretum. In my six-week journey across the country, it seemed to me this was the most beautiful spot I had seen in all America.

San Diego Garden Club Center

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FLOWER ARRANGERS' GUILD
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AFFILIATE MEMBERS, 1961

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President: Mrs. Arthur Tenney Emerson
416 Ninth Ave., Coronado HE 5-5790
Rep. Dir.: Mrs. Anuta Lynch
202 Lewis, S.D. 3 CY 8-1400

CONVAIR GARDEN CLUB—
Second Wednesday, Floral Building, 7:30 p.m.
President: Henry Boyd
6581 Broadway, S.D. 14 CO 4-1283
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MISSION GARDEN CLUB OF SAN DIEGO—
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President: Mrs. E. R. Bohe
3145 N. Mountain View Dr., S.D. 16, AT 2-7422
Rep. Dir.: Mrs. June Drown
1665 Darnell Rd., S.D. 5 CO 4-5214

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President: Robert H. Calvin
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3130 2nd, San Diego 3 CY 5-5871

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SAN DIEGO COUNTY DAHLIA SOCIETY
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Rep. Dir.: Dr. J. W. Troxell
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SAN DIEGO COUNTY ORCHID SOCIETY—
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President: R. B. Dugan
762 N. Granados, Solana Beach SK 5-4343
Rep. Dir.: Miss Elizabeth A. Newkirk
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SAN DIEGO FUCHSIA SOCIETY—
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Rep. Dir.: Mrs. Mary Bray Watson
1627 Commonwealth Ave., S.D. 4, AT 4-2669

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2260 Catalina, S.D. 7 AC 3-6183
Rep. Dir.: Mrs. Joseph J. Kenneally

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President: Mrs. John Hoaglin
3746 Ben, S.D. 11 BR 7-1368
Rep. Dir.: Mrs. D. R. Gardiner
8033 Linda Vista Rd., S.D. 11 BR 7-3635

OTHER GARDEN CLUBS

AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
San Diego Branch
Fourth Mon., Barbours Hall 8:00 p.m.
President: University & Pershing, BR 4-1746
San Miguel Branch
First Wed., Youth Center, Lemon Grove, 8:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. Jack Brook HO 6-0162

CABRILLO—MISSION GARDEN CLUB
Third Thurs., Members' Gardens, 9:30 a.m.
President: Mrs. Raymond K. Stone BR 7-7134

CARLSBAD GARDEN CLUB
First Fri., City Annex, 1:00 p.m.
President: Mrs. John L. Wick PA 9-1913

CHULA VISTA FUCHSIA CLUB
Second Tues., C. V. Women's Club, 7:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. J. L. Riese GA 2-0587

CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB
Third Wed., C.V. First Christian Club, 1:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. Elmer Berggren HA 0-3504

CLAIREMONT GARDEN CLUB
Third Tues., Clairemont Community Center, 10:00 a.m.
President: Mrs. Wm. Cordes BR 6-4182

CORONADO FLORAL ASSOCIATION
No regular meeting date, Christ Church Parish Hall
President: Adm. G. D. Zumeuhlein HE 5-6361

CROWN GARDEN CLUB OF CORONADO
Fourth Thurs., Red Cross Bldg., 1113 Adella Lane
President: Mrs. J. Dunham Reilly HE 5-4685

DEL CADIA GARDEN CLUB
President: Mrs. Knute Eastman PL 2-3029

DOS VALLES GARDEN CLUB (Pauma Valley)
Second Tues., Homes of members, 1:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. Henry Gale PL 2-3286

ESCONDIDO GARDEN CLUB
Third Fri., Women's Club House, 1:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. Albert Seibert SH 5-6933
Flower Arrangers Work shop—first Friday, 9:30 a.m.
Horticulture Workshop—fourth Friday, 9:30 a.m.

EVA KENWORTHY GRAY BEGONIA SOCIETY
Third Mon., Community House, La Jolla, 7:30 p.m.
President: Col. Edwin P. Lock, Jr. GL 4-4752

FALLBROOK GARDEN CLUB
Last Thurs., Reche Clubhouse, 1:30 p.m. RA 8-7233

IMPERIAL BEACH GARDEN CLUB
Third Tues., South Bay Community Center, 1:00 p.m.
President: Mrs. Al Hague GA 4-9425

LAKESIDE GARDEN CLUB
Third Mon., Lakeside Farm School, 7:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. Cecil Carender HI 3-1575

LA MESA SPRINGHOUSE GARDEN CLUB
Third Thurs., Porter Hall, La Mesa, 7:30 p.m.
President: Cdr. Alfred A. Paulsen HO 6-8366

LA MESA WOMEN'S CLUB (Garden Section)
Third Thurs., La Mesa Women's Club, 1:45 p.m.
President: Mrs. Eva K. Shearer HO 6-5810

LEMON GROVE WOMEN'S CLUB
(Garden Section)
First Tues., Lemon Grove Women's Club House, 1:00 p.m.
Chairman: Mrs. Frank Barber HO 6-8641

MISSION BEACH WOMEN'S CLUB
(Garden Section)
First Fri., Mission Beach Women's Club House, 9:00 a.m.
Chairman: Mrs. Gertrude Kennedy BR 8-8374

NATIONAL CITY GARDEN CLUB
Third Wed., National City Community Bldg., 7:30 p.m.
President: Kenneth Boulette GR 7-9240

O. C. IT GROW GARDEN CLUB
Second Wed., South Oceanside School Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.
President: Walter Watchorn SA 2-3501

PACIFIC BEACH GARDEN CLUB
Second Mon., Home Federal Friendship Hall, 7:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. Ernest Ambort BR 6-1595

RANCHO SANTA FE GARDEN CLUB
Second Wed.,
President: Mrs. Hardy H. Kent PL 6-1428

SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCULENT CLUB
First Sat., Youth Center, Lemon Grove
President: C. Hardin HO 9-3038

SANTA MARIA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
Second Mon., Ramona Park, 10:00 a.m.
President: Mrs. Frank McKenzie

VISTA GARDEN CLUB
First Fri., Vista Recreation Center, 1:30 p.m.
President: Mrs. Jack Morgan PA 4-7510

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California Garden

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER, 1961

The Amazing San Diego County Dahlia Story

by Larry Sisk

SUMMERTIME is dahlia time in San Diego and California.

Home gardeners grow them for massed color, and for cut flowers. The specialists grow them for exhibition, as well as for color and for cutting.

Dahlia enthusiasts are just as devoted to their specialty—if not more so—as rose growers, cactus fans, or any of the many other hobby groups.

Dahlias are especially adapted to Southern California. They are a part of the Mexican influence on our culture. Even before they were discovered by the white man in 1570, dahlias were growing wild on the uplands of Mexico, and were highly prized by Mexico's Indians.

The dahlia was adaptable as a festival flower; it was in bloom at fiesta time, and a natural source of color for a color-loving people. Early horticultural writers said there were strong indications that when the Indians migrated, they carried along dahlia roots for planting out; the roots were a source of medicine as well as color.

Legend has it that some of those early dahlias were brought to San Diego County's San Luis Rey Mission by the padres of Junipero Serra's time, and continued to grow in their wild state around the mission as recently as a few years ago.

The dahlia known today throughout the world is a much more colorful flower, and more spectacular. At first

it was mostly a single type, with not much size or variety of blossom. Now it is grown in a dozen distinct types and in all colors and combinations except blue. At the annual dahlia show August 5 and 6 in Balboa Park's Conference Building, all types and colors will be on display. The flowers will cover the entire size range, too, from one-half inch to upwards of 14 to 16 inches.

Development of the dahlia, which began when it was taken to Europe by the New World explorers, has continued, and is continuing each year. Only a few years ago, the large blooms were referred to as "dinner plate" flowers—pretty accurate because there wasn't much depth to the real big ones. But now the term is as obsolete as the big flat flowers themselves. Large exhibition blooms today are measured for depth as well as diameter. As an example, the largest flower in the show is likely to have a depth of 11 to 12 inches if it is 14 to 15 inches across.

This compares with the measurements of an old "dinner plate" champion, Clara Carder, which seldom racked up a better score than 12 by 4 inches.

Another description that is out of date is "shaggy." The flowers now are classified distinctly, with none appropriately called shaggy. There are two majestic types, the formal decora-

tives and the cactus types; in between, informal decoratives and semi-cactus. Each type can be recognized easily by following the same set of standards used by dahlia specialists all over the world.

Flowers are classified by form, whether they are miniatures, under 4 inches; BB's, from 4 to 6 inches (favored by florists); mediums, from 6 to 8 inches; or large, from 8 inches up. The types are the same, whether large or small.

Completing the family of types are a wide variety of novelties, and the pompons, from small to large. Among the former are singles, collarettes, peony, orchid, minions, and anemone varieties.

Pompons are 2 inches or under; if they are larger they are called miniature balls up to 4 inches, and just balls if more than 4 inches. A couple of decades ago or earlier, the balls were known only as "show" dahlias; they were exhibited with no foliage or stems, just floating in shallow pans.

BECAUSE dahlias are happy in San Diego's climate and long growing season, San Diego is home to many world-famous blooms grown by dahlia lovers everywhere. Some of the most famous dahlia hybridizers and developers have followed their hobby and vocation here, growing seed for world export, and producing new

varieties that have swept the top awards wherever competitive exhibitions are held.

One of the world's foremost hybridizers, the late Charles Pape, lived for a time in Chula Vista before going to Santa Barbara and achieving fame for dahlias that still continue as top winners, year after year.

His most famous variety, introduced in 1946, probably has won more honors than any other dahlia ever grown. It is called Mrs. Hester Pape, named for his wife. Mrs. Pape resides in La Jolla and keeps in touch with friends of her husband by attending shows in the Midwest and East. She recently was presented with the key to the city of Birmingham, Alabama, at the Southern States Silver Anniversary Dahlia Show.

The bloom Mrs. Hester Pape is a large reddish purple, informal decorative, which will grow to 12 inches or so. Many show reports each year list it as best bloom, or best in class.

Another dahlia named for a San Diego woman, and developed here, the Hazel Harper, also is world famous. It is a pink miniature cactus, listed in dahlia classification catalogs as the ideal of its type.

It was grown from seed by Mrs. George (Hazel) Harper of Mission Hills, and after winning the cherished Derrill Hart medal as the best of the year from the American Dahlia Society, it was sent to world fame by an Eastern introducer.

Cy Ramage of Chula Vista develop-



Comstock's 'Lula Pattie'

Named for a woman, but a man's dahlia. Most of the big ones are.



Partain's 'Princess Dianne'



Comstock's 'Art Linkletter'



Photograph by Walter Bray

Hazel Harper's 'Hazel Harper'

ed the still-popular and famous Five Star General in 1946, and Mr. President in 1955. The former, introduced by an Eastern distributor, is a large, pink formal decorative. The latter is a large, incurved cactus of salmon rose blending into empire yellow at the center.

Roy Partain of Point Loma also is among the San Diego dahlia greats. He developed the large, informal decorative red bloom named Princess Dianne, put on the market in 1951.

R. Paul Comstock of Solana Beach, known throughout the West as Mr. Dahlia, introduced Ramage's Mr. President and Partain's Princess Dianne.

Comstock currently could claim the world's Mr. Dahlia title, too, because many of his own flowers are heading the Courts of Honor winners at dahlia exhibitions wherever the blooms are grown and shown.

He and his Comstock Dahlia Gardens have been well known in Southern California floriculture circles for more than a quarter of a century. Comstock is an installation superintendent for the telephone company, operating his dahlia farm at the southern edge of Solana Beach as a sideline.

As a youngster, Comstock was a professional wrestler, but when he injured a leg he gave up wrestling, and started growing dahlias while the leg healed.

Soon after he began growing flowers in a canyon garden in Normal

Heights, Comstock started developing varieties of his own from seed. His first successful introduction was a large autumn, Aztec Chief, still listed in some catalogs.

At first there wasn't much interest in dahlias in San Diego, because there wasn't any opportunity to display them, Comstock recalls. He and his friend Ramage decided to do something about it during the 1935 Exposition, by staging a display of massed dahlias, as a part of an exhibition sponsored by the San Diego Floral Association.

A year later Comstock, Ramage, and several other hobbyists staged San Diego's first exclusive dahlia show in Balboa Park's Spanish Village. Each year since there has been a San Diego dahlia show. During World War II the shows constituted only displays in yards of dahlia fans.

The San Diego County Dahlia Society was organized by Comstock, Ramage, Miss Hazel Plimley, the late Herman Lodge, and several other pioneering devotees. This year the society, under the presidency of Floyd McCracken, is staging its 21st annual show—not counting the back yard shows of the war years.

In recalling early-day dahlia growers here, Comstock said the first flowers he remembers seeing were in about 1930, when he was attracted to a large container of them shown in a grocery by Lodge.

Other early growers included Har-

vey Atherton and Mouney C. Pfefferkorn. A number of years ago Pfefferkorn published a pamphlet on dahlia culture which today is a collector's item.

Comstock has honored both Atherton and Pfefferkorn by naming famous flowers for them. The Harvey Atherton, introduced in 1956, is a large, purple, formal decorative. The Mouney C., 1958, is a white, BB-size formal that is almost a perfect ball, currently winning the blues wherever shown.

COMSTOCK'S most famous introduction was First Lady (see cover), which began its climb to world-wide fame when it swept the San Diego show and other California shows in 1954. In the last three years it has ranked with or surpassed Mrs. Hester Pape as a top winner.

Other Comstock introductions are the white medium cactus, Florence Chadwick; the medium yellow formal, Maureen Connolly, and the large yellow semi-cactus, Art Linkletter—all world-famous, named for world-famous San Diegans.

Among other famous Comstock introductions listed in all dahlia catalogs are the Groucho Marx, Miss Liberty, Miss San Diego, Stardust, and many more.

The current sensation is a large white semi-cactus, introduced last year and named Lula Pattie for Comstock's mother. After winning several best-in-show and largest-bloom awards last year, it was in great demand for planting this year. He claims it is a far better flower than another big white he introduced in 1935 and named Pattie Lou.

Lula Pattie is a man's dahlia. Most of the big ones are. Women growers prefer the mediums or the smaller varieties, probably because they are more adaptable for cutting and arranging.

As a matter of fact, most dahlia hobbyists are men; they say it's because the dahlia is a man's flower. Of course, women like them; and women like to have their men grow them because they keep the men at home and in the garden.

There is something about growing dahlias that gives the man gardener a chance for achievement—the urge to grow the biggest, or the smallest, or just the best.

See for yourself. Go to the dahlia show and look over the Court of Honor.

Chances are that the men gardeners will be well represented.

Big Dahlia Fever

by Charles F. Pape

Editor's Note: Charles F. Pape (1871-1953), world-famous as a dahlia hybridizer, was a knowledgeable and eloquent spokesman for his favorite flower. The excerpts below are from manuscripts supplied by his widow, Mrs. Hester Pape, and his niece, Mrs. Emmett Fowler, Jr. (the original of another famous Pape dahlia, Virginia B. Taggart), both of La Jolla. Portions of this material appeared originally in *The Dahlia*, Official Bulletin of the Central States Dahlia Society.

Not so many years ago I recall how proud we were of our "enormous" eight inch dahlias; we now speak of our 15 and 16 inch flowers, often eight inches deep, with equal pride. The dahlias of the future will improve, just as those of the past have done. Study and individual research on the part of each enthusiast are the keys which will make possible larger and finer flowers with stronger, straighter stems, and healthier foliage. . . . The time will come when a grower can produce the color he wishes, even blue, when he wishes.

* * *

Anyone can grow choice dahlias from seed. Stupendous giants, sprightly cacti, prim pompons, and dainty miniatures, all are exciting to grow from seed in your own garden.

By choosing a fine seed parent which has proven itself, then crossing it with a sire of known ability, the likelihood of producing a top winner is much increased.

These crosses are not produced in a haphazard way. They are not produced by pressing the thumb and forefinger over the pollen of one flower and mashing it into the pollen of another. Pollen is delicate and sensitive; it does not cherish rough treatment.

The varieties selected for seed are carefully watched to make sure they are in good condition. All irrigation is withheld, and the plant has an opportunity to dry, causing the flowers to bloom fully with open centers. These open centers contain the all-important pollen. Using a very fine camel's hair brush I carry the pollen from one flower to the one with which I wish to cross it. After depositing the pollen, I cover the latter bloom with a fine



Pape's 'Hester Pape'

netting to prevent contamination by unwanted pollen carried by bugs and bees.

Another very good method . . . is to plant the two varieties close enough together that they may be fastened to the same stake. When seed time arrives, blossoms of the two plants are tied together so that one faces the other at a distance of about six inches; the bees and the butterflies do the rest.

* * *

Although I have some 3,000 plants growing, most of which are "Honor Roll" dahlias, my greatest interest lies in the part of the garden I call the "jungle," my seedling patch. Every day I scrutinize each opening bud to see if it is going to be one of the "Big Boys," or the elusive blue one, long dreamed of by dahlia fans.

* * *

Seedlings are chiefly used for the development of new varieties, but are also very effective when used for a mass of brilliant color in the garden. Many landscape artists, both professional and amateur, are "gardening with color." A bed of dahlia seedlings is ideal for this purpose . . . The best specimens can be saved from the group for separate planting the next year.

* * *

I am often the first to see a prize beauty that an enthusiast has found among his seedlings . . . I know he is afflicted with a malady known as "big dahlia fever," and furthermore, that he does not want to get well; neither do I. I have had the "fever" for sixty years and I shall always thrill to the sight of a giant dahlia on a strong, straight stem.



SAN CLEMENTE CANYON —

• San Clemente Canyon has been a citizens' project from the time it was "discovered" by the children of Clairemont residents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard B. Wilson. When Wilson proposed the park idea to the Clairemont Town Council, he started a series of events that culminated in the successful 1960 ballot proposal for city acquisition of the land.

Jean Morley's interest began early this year when she learned about the richness of the canyon's bird life. Through her work with Citizens Coordinate, she is largely responsible for the city's recognition of the need for tree trimming and cleanup in the canyon.

Citizens Coordinate stands for—and works for—enlightened city planning; architectural excellence; preservation of open spaces, vistas and vegetation; tree planting and landscaping; and control of visual nuisance. Basically, it aims at a handsome San Diego—an ambitious goal, but perhaps not an impossible one for informed and willing citizens.

Opportunity for a Natural Park

by Jean Morley

SAN Diegans will be amazed at San Clemente Canyon. Not only will they react with delight to the number and size of the native trees, to the greenness hidden between two dry mesas, but many will be surprised to learn that these natural treasures belong to them as citizens of San Diego. Each one of us owns an undivided and indivisible interest in this 400-acre, ready-made park which runs roughly west by south between North Clairemont and University City.

The very shape of the area, long and narrow, invites a leisurely walk to observe the variations in beauty — underfoot, at eye level, overhead—and to explore the scenic vistas around the bend, up the next finger canyon, or at a new angle through a favorite group of trees.

On the steep south slope, huge Live Oaks with wide-spreading branches offer deep shade on hot days. In the streambed are Sycamores, their irregular, light-green leaves making a dappled pattern that echoes the dappled grays of the bark. Around their gnarled roots cluster the moisture-loving Willows, a favorite of many birds as a source of food and nesting materials.

Equally delightful are the flowers, which have been blooming even in this dry year. Most abundant are rounded, pink-white clusters of Wild Buckwheat and flat, yellow-white clusters of Elderberry. Red is provided by the Sticky Monkey Flower, protruding from some of the deeply eroded gullies that join the streambed from the south. Wild Mustard and Wild Tobacco flaunt gay yellow

blooms; earlier in the season the red of Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry kept the bright Anna's Hummingbirds busy. The variety of plants is large: ferns in shade on the south slope, tules in the streambed, Prickly Pear Cactus, Chamise and Gourd in the open.

Apparently the area has supported vegetation for countless years. An 1872 land survey called it "Huerta de Clemente," meaning "Garden of Clemente." Clemente seems to have been the Indian in charge of vineyards and orchards for the big estate which included the canyon. How this "Clemente" came to be sainted is unknown.

Everyone acquainted with the canyon agrees that its relatively undisturbed state, its unique opportunities for study, and the age of its native vegetation are all major assets. Here, among trees that were growing when Cabrillo landed, the history of our California landscape may be read: how canyons were eroded from a plain; how streambeds change course, and gullies and islands begin; how banks are preserved in nature (without retaining walls and iceplant!).

The excitement of teachers and scientists upon discovering the canyon testifies to its importance as an outdoor laboratory. In nature, each group of plants and animals in a given location represents a balanced community. Why have some survived where others failed? Valuable conclusions may be drawn by comparing the plants growing on the dry north slope with those along the streambed (once watered), and those on the shaded southern cliff; and by observing how the lush, flat meadow gradually changes to Oak-

Chaparral vegetation, and thence to Streambed vegetation, as soil, sun and erosion make their marks. No comparable area for the student remains in San Diego.

ITS value in this regard has already been amply demonstrated. Frank Gander recalls taking Boy Scout groups there for nature study. Dr. E. Dean Milow, of San Diego State College, while working on his dissertation, found fossil life indicating that the ocean had covered the area some 50 million years ago. Laurence Huey, of the San Diego Natural History Museum, and Lewis Walker, now Director of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson, for many years have used the canyon for scientific research and photography. Most recently, John Hooper and Abram Edelson, 10th graders at Clairemont High School, presented an exhibit at the 1961 Science Fair entitled "Ecology of San Clemente Canyon."

These factors point up the importance of developing the canyon as a natural park in order to preserve its unique characteristics and phenomena for posterity. In contrast to the activity and confusion characteristic of the usual recreation area, such a park would offer a place of quiet where one could observe and learn, or merely rest and replenish the intangibles of humanity. Other communities, recognizing the importance of preserving examples of typical landscape for future generations, have set aside such areas as sanctuaries (two in Los Angeles last year!), but San Clemente Canyon is the first effort of its kind

in San Diego. Even its future is uncertain, because natural assets, by their very nature, are perishable.

ANY visitor to the canyon will see that its beauty and value have been gradually disappearing. He'll note where top soil, leaf mold, sod have been removed, and trees cut down. He'll note miscellaneous litter left behind by picnickers. Above all, he'll note the fire hazard. Dry grass, dead snags, limbs and underbrush left from years of neglect by former owners, the tree trimmings discarded by firewood collectors—all add up to a serious menace. One carelessly-discarded cigarette, one unsupervised child experimenting with matches, and the record of centuries would disappear.

Wisely, the City Council this summer included funds in the City budget to allow a Park Department crew, under Park Superintendent Lloyd Lowrey, to work in the canyon on trimming dead limbs and removing brush to preserve the existing trees from both disease and fire. Such work, long overdue, will protect the investment of the citizens of San Diego, who authorized acquisition of this land in the 1960 election, in keeping with recommendations by the Planning Department, the Planning Commission, and the City Council.

Two further steps by the Council seem imperative at this time. The first is to pass an ordinance dedicating San Clemente Canyon in perpetuity as a park, so that it may not be diverted to any other use. City land not so dedicated "may be used for any public purpose deemed necessary by the Council." (Sec. 55, Charter). The second, and simultaneous, step is to pass a

resolution clearly stating the City's intent to develop the area as a natural park. Neither step costs money.

The concept of a natural park recognizes natural features as primary assets, worthy of preservation, and uses them as a core around which use is planned. Activities carried on in such a park must not be harmful to its unique features. Hiking trails, self-guided nature trails, outdoor laboratories for school children, family picnic tables and restrooms so placed as to cause least disturbance to vegetation, access (not through) roads — these offer guide lines for development.

Still another advantage relates to the best use of space. Paul Brooks, in his article "The Pressure of Numbers," *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb. '61, points out that "... the size of a park is directly related to the manner in which you use it. If you are in a canoe traveling at three miles an hour, the lake on which you are paddling is ten times as long and ten times as broad as it is to the man in a speedboat going thirty ... In other words, more people can use the same space with the same results ... every road that replaces a footpath ... shrinks the area of a park."

MORE San Diegans should acquaint themselves with the charms of San Clemente Canyon. They may startle a covey of California Quail, causing the birds to retreat hastily but with dignity (head plumes carried erect) to a favorite brushpile. Swarms of Swifts and Swallows will be seen occasionally flying in low circles over the meadow gathering insects. Everywhere, at the proper time of day, are bird songs. The volume of

burbling House Wrens in spring caused one Audubon Society member to propose changing the place name to Wren Canyon. Perhaps the pic-pic of the Nuttall's Woodpecker will be heard before the bird can be spotted on a decaying Sycamore limb. The ominous rustle in the underbrush may be a California Ground Squirrel scurrying off with an acorn, a Desert Cottontail fleeing, or a Rufous-sided Towhee scratching for food in the dead leaves.

Once alerted, San Diegans will want to support the agencies and individuals in City government who have been working toward a natural park in the canyon. The Park and Recreation Commission, at present considering a recommendation to the Council for an ordinance dedicating the area as a park, and a resolution of intention to develop it as a *natural* park, will welcome your views (write to the Commission at Administration Building, Balboa Park). When the matter comes before the City Council, your Councilman needs to know that you care. Let him know by letter or phone call, and by attendance at Council meetings when the matter is presented.

Perhaps the individual citizen's greatest service will come from his influence on his friends and neighbors. Enthusiastic, vocal support is the best way to insure the future of San Clemente Canyon.

You will be amazed at this treasure which is now in your hands. See for yourself. Visit it (best access at present is from North Clairemont, off Regents Road), explore it, enjoy it, but take care of it (leave your shovel at home), then add your voice and your energy to its proper development.

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THE SPIKY FOLIAGE of *Wachendorfia* appears at the right edge of the picture, in the corner of the pool. Bloom spike crosses diagonally to the left. This was the second of two blooms. The first, out of the picture at right, was considerably taller when the picture was taken in May. Garden design by Roland S. Hoyt.

Rare Water Plant Blooms

by Roland S. Hoyt

AN unusual South African water plant, *Wachendorfia thyrsiflora*, has bloomed in San Diego.

The species is so obscure botanically that Bailey shunts aside its family, Hamaedraceae, and refers the student to Amaryllidaceae and Liliaceae. If the novice follows Bailey's cross references, he finds nothing he can recognize. At least we have the plant, and that is nearly all we know about it.

The foliage of *Wachendorfia thyrsiflora* is distinctive, handsome and quite substantial. The elongated leaves are sword-like, plicated or pleated, and come to a sharp point. As a garden subject, the clump is quite acceptable planted in water, or probably in very

damp ground, where, however, a tendency to rust spots might be accentuated. It is interesting to note that another member of the family called "Redroot" is native in swamps along the eastern seaboard, and is sometimes transplanted to gardens.

The unusual, and rather stirring, first local blooming of *Wachendorfia thyrsiflora* took place during April-June in the Point Loma garden of Mrs. John H. Fox. The plant, after hanging for several years in a container at the side of the fish pool with its red roots coloring the water, finally made a decision. It evidently had heard various conversations relative to a common garden term, "dumping,"

and elected to produce.

Early in April, two tentative buds appeared and began elongating. Soon the flat, funnel-shaped, golden flowers began opening to a russet-tinged complex. The head, a kind of thyrse, extended vigorously until, in May, the spike was six feet tall. The florets, three-quarters of an inch in width, appeared in little panicles at right angles to the hollow main stalk. This bloom spike accounts for the common name "Gold Wand." There is a peculiar recurrence here, in that when the original flowering had finished, another set of single blooms appeared, adding interest to the lower stalk as the flowering climbed.

Dainty, Intriguing, Variable

CEROPEGIAS

. . . odd but cherished Africans

by Dorothy S. Behrends

MANY of the plants that window gardeners in severe climates have to nurse along grow without fuss in Southern California, some in sheltered patios, others in open ground. The whole great list of our borrowings from South Africa falls into this category, Saintpaulias or African Violets being perhaps the most highly publicized example, and Bird-of-Paradise the most popular in Southern California. Another interesting African for collectors to consider is the *Ceropegia*.

Ceropegias, akin to *Hoya carnosa* (wax vine), belong to the milkweed or Asclepias family. They might be classed as plant chameleons, since the same species under different conditions often produces what appears to be a distinctly different type. Like a chameleon, they change according to lighting, background and plant associates.

There are only a few named species

available, but these occur with many variations, not only for the reason above, but because of changes appearing among seedlings. These seedlings usually are not distinctive enough to be given new names. There is no record of hybridization of *ceropegias* by man.

The dainty species most often seen is *Ceropegia woodi*, called the Rosary Vine. Its heart-shaped leaves are mottled green, overlaid with silver. Leaf size will vary considerably according to growing conditions, reaching an inch across at times, but often as small as a dime even when healthy. This twining vine drapes gracefully and soon becomes tangled into a mat that will hide a container. Blooms are tubular, waxy-coated pink flowers which appear in pairs.

Ceropegia woodi is easy to propagate, since small tubers or bulbs appear in quantity along the slender stems. These may be potted in an all-

Left: *Ceropegia bastata*

Drawings by the author.

purpose mix ($\frac{1}{2}$ loam, $\frac{1}{4}$ sand, $\frac{1}{4}$ leaf mold) and started in a warm location. The plants will set seed more readily if they are grown on the dry side, though not so dry as cacti.

Ceropegia barklyi is similar in color to *C. woodi*, but the green underlay of its leaves turns a rosy-purple when exposed to strong, though not burning, light. Its growth habit and blooms are similar to *C. woodi*.

C. cafferorum has a heavy, succulent leaf of solid green, varying in shade according to the amount of light. It is a rampant grower in the shade garden.

C. debilis has a distinctively narrow leaf, long and almost thread-like. It is green with a silver stripe in the center of the depressed vein area. Typically, the leaves cross one another along the slender stem, making this variety an airy and delightful hanging plant.

C. stapeliaeformis is the unorthodox *ceropegia*, since its leaves are tiny and drop quickly. Its jointed, succulent stems resemble an elongated *stapelia*, which accounts for its name. Handle it like a shade-garden succulent, but not too damp. It is procumbent by nature, but also makes an excellent climbing subject when given support, as against a grape-stake fence. This *ceropegia* does not produce tubers, but must be propagated by seeds or stem cuttings.

C. sandersoni is another non-tuberous type. Its stems, and rounded, heart-shaped leaves are heavier and more succulent than the other varieties



C. woodi



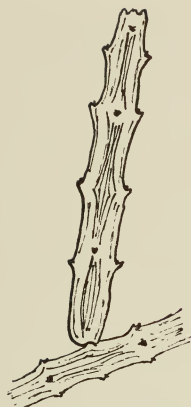
C. barklyi



C. cafferorum



C. debilis



C. stapeliaeformis



C. sandersoni



C. afra

mentioned (with the exception of *stapeliaeformis*). Its leaves are few and scattered, leaving a great deal of stem showing, but it is a worthwhile addition to a collection because of its fascinating flowers. This variety produces the largest flowers of the group, usually two inches long and one and a half inches wide. One can easily imagine each waxy flower as a parachute descending to earth with a

chutist dangling from the ropes.

In spite of the inconspicuous flowers of some of these varieties, most of them will set seed when grown in protected locations. The seed pods, which require at least six months to mature, are shown in the drawing of *C. barklyi*. When ripe, they burst open to reveal the seeds ($\frac{1}{8}$ " long) attached to floss wings, to attract the wind as with their milkweed cousins.

The *C. afra* drawing shows both sides of the brown seeds, one rounded, the other depressed in the center.

Dainty, intriguing, variable, these words describe ceropegias. Try them as cover in the succulent garden, or trailing near a waterfall; hang one in the patio or use them as house plants. You may find that one leads to another, until you, too, are a collector of these odd but cherished Africans.

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The Living Lath House

... sharing the good things in life with your plants

WHILE other San Diegans head for the beaches to escape the heat of August and September, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest O. Adams step down into a split-level, living lath house in their own back yard. Open to the breeze but closed to the wind, with greenery on all sides and a solid roof to cut the heat of the sun, their lath house becomes their summer living room. And dining room. And kitchen.

Mrs. Adams' fascination with flowers dates back to the days when, as a young girl, she tried to transplant the yellow violets she found growing wild on the southern edge of Balboa Park to the family front yard on Cedar Street. That youthful interest turned, in time, toward shade plants, with an emphasis on fuchsias, begonias, philodendrons and ferns. In the Adams' lath house, these plants are integrated through the use of natural materials into a setting designed for human comfort.

Hanging baskets made from gnarled oak burls, and raised planters faced with cedar bark, lend the lath house a pleasantly natural air. In effect, the containers fade into an over-all color scheme of muted browns and grays that shows off the rich green of ferns

and the bright blooms of fuchsias and begonias to stunning purpose. There are no harsh angles or jarring, man-made colors to interfere with the simple enjoyment of plants.

Mr. Adams, thrice-retired but still working, is a descendant of the U.S. Presidents of the same name. He built the lath house over a period of four years, with much of that time spent scouring the back country for rocks, burls, logs and bark.

BECAUSE of the slope of the lot, the outdoor rooms are a full story below house level. Next to the house, and accessible to a work shop and storage area in the basement, is a fully-equipped kitchen furnished with antiques. A modern sink and electric hot plate make it a practical, working kitchen. Plants are here too—in the raised, used brick planter dividing kitchen from living room.

Step down one step into a room surrounded by greenery. Here you find easy chairs, dining table and benches, a small naturalistic waterfall and pool, even television, if you care. This, the living room, is roofed with corrugated aluminum so that it remains dark and cool on even the hot-



IN THE Adams lath house: hanging baskets, raised beds of natural materials.

test days. Shade plants, in containers and raised beds that have the look of the forest about them, thrive in this atmosphere that humans find so comfortable.

Another step downward takes you under a ceiling of fluorescent tubing into a brighter and even more garden-like room. Fuchsias bloom here first, and the bright colors of coleus decorate a plant stand against the sheltering garage wall. Almost a conservatory in the old-fashioned sense, this room provides the added spaciousness that has enabled the Adamses to entertain the entire San Diego Fuchsia Society, of which Mrs. Adams is President, in their living lath house.

The plants in these garden rooms are standard varieties. Mrs. Adams leaves the rarer and more difficult specimens to others, since for her a lath house is for relaxation. Once established, she claims, it is almost worry-free, given regular, but not continuous, care. As an example, she notes that it takes only one hour to water-feed-water their entire collection of plants, a duty which falls due every two weeks during the growing season.

To grow shade plants in San Diego, you have to create a climate that suits them. While you're at it, you might as well add facilities for humans. If the idea intrigues you, Mr. and Mrs. Adams invite you to drop by 4180 Hamilton Street in North Park to see how a living lath house has worked for them.



IN SUMMER, the cook deserves to get out of the house and into the garden.

BOOK TOURS

Conducted by Alice W. Heyneman

Garden Shrubs and Trees. By S. G. Harrison. The Kew Series. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1960. 318 pages. \$4.95.

This is a fine, decorative reference book, fun to leaf through for the pleasure of the plates alone. But there is much more to it than the plates: family by family the whole field of cultivated ornamentals is gathered here for the interested reader, and presented according to the latest and best systems of classification.

The Introduction, mainly a discussion of botanic structure, also includes a short rundown of origins, and a brief explanation of names. Following is a detailed Key to the Genera—a marvel of scientific organization, even if a bit over some of our heads.

The main part of the book can be followed happily by any interested beginner. The subjects include a great majority of familiar garden friends: magnolias and ceanothus, cistus and cytisus, heathers and viburnums and philadelphus and scores more, not to mention trees and small ornamentals like peonies and roses. But the book, after all, was written and first published in England, for the English gardening public, so it is natural that if one looks for a heavy showing of camellias, say, or fuchsias, the fact that they are given shorter shrift than the oak and ash and thorn of England is hardly surprising. Camellias and fuchsias are there, however, even if our own familiar subtropicals are not.

The book is a fine reference work in which to run down, among other things, varieties of maples or pines, of flowering cherries and crabs, hollies or honeysuckle. In all there are 67 families, all properly divided into their subspecies, with concise descriptions easily usable by a beginner, especially the ambitious one who has mastered the Key at the beginning and the Glossary at the end. For pleasure, though, and simple identification, this last really isn't necessary. Both scientific and popular names are given, and though culture is omitted, there are interesting items about distribution, origin, and habitat. A most comprehensive index, 15 pages of it, is a tool of the greatest possible value to student or amateur.

Garden Shrubs and Trees is the fourth volume of the Kew Series, all

planned and written by members of the botanical staff of the renowned Kew Gardens near London. Their books are all intended to be, essentially, practical guides to the various fields of botany they plan to cover. There will be more in the future. (A. W. H.)

Succulents in Cultivation (Cacti included). By Vera Higgins. Blandford Press Ltd., London. 168 pages. \$4.95.

Vera Higgins writes on succulents with authority. She has been growing them for thirty years, has one of the most representative private collections in England, is a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, President of the National Cactus Society, and past editor of the *Journal of the Cactus and Succulent Society of Great Britain*. Her book should appeal to a wide public, for there is evident at present an increase in the popularity of succulents, not only in scientific and horticultural circles, but for use as decoration in the home and garden.

The author gives a general idea of the conditions under which succulents normally grow, indicates treatment required when they are grown under conditions other than normal, and describes a wide range of plants available in cultivation. Included is a welcome index to plant names and illustrations.

The treatment and the vocabulary are keyed to the interests and knowledge of both amateurs and professionals. Horticultural advice is well adapted to Southern California conditions. Numerous illustrations—72 photographs, many line drawings, eight color plates from paintings by the author of specimens in her own collection—add to the attractiveness of this practical and thorough book.

Reviewed by Alice M. Greer

California Spring Wildflowers. By Philip A. Munz. University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1961. 122 pages. \$2.95, paper bound.

California Spring Wildflowers is a handy little book with many pictures in black and white and nearly a hundred small color plates. Primarily it is a brisk and brief rundown of means of identifying common wildflower spe-

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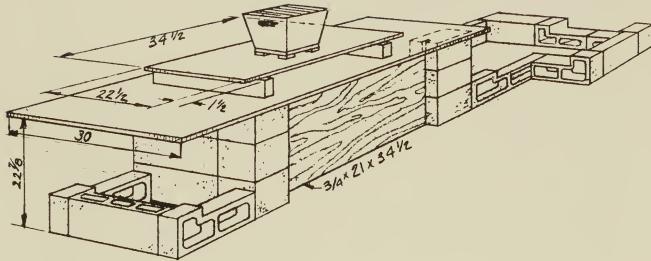
cies. It is divided into chapters by colors, just as was the old wildflower Bible of my youth, the Parsons *Wild Flowers of California*. Unlike the Parsons book, it is limited in scope: it omits mountain flora, and contains spring bloomers only. (Here there is a close distinction; spring on the lower mountain slopes and spring on the coast may and do occur in quite different months—but doubtless this was taken into account.)

For all its wealth of illustrations, I found the book somewhat frustrating and difficult to find my way around in. One obvious reason is that it is a layman's condensation of a much larger and more comprehensive work, *A California Flora*, by the same author. In the cutting, proportions—of importance, distribution, habitat, and so on—may have been lost sight of, to the possible confusion of a new reader. For instance, there are five very brief mentions of Lupine varieties—which, after all, is all that Mrs. Parsons allowed; but at least she mentions the endless fields "taking on a delicate amethystine tinge." This is something many of us have seen in memorable brilliance in many places, whereas nothing in Mr. Munz's book would indicate that lupines are of any more scenic importance than Shepherd's Purse or members of the Mint family.

Thus, the book does seem a bit oversimplified. The thesis, stated in the Introduction, that there are, for instance, so many gillias, penstemons, or paintbrushes "so much alike only the more observant and perhaps technically interested" are going to want to differentiate them, is perhaps open to discussion: if you are going to do wildflower field work at all, it would be nice to have, if not hundreds of related varieties, at least a dozen.

Despite such minor carping, this is a worthwhile book for the wildflower enthusiast. I don't find it as practical either in shape or in content for packing into the country as the fat little *Western Wild Flowers* of Margaret Armstrong, which, despite its publication date of 1915, still seems to me tops as a simple, non-technical field book. Doubtless the large volume from which *California Spring Wildflowers* evolved is really the last word: it has 1681 pages and describes 6000 plants!

There is a good index, which includes in a separate section the plants shown in the color plates. Since the latter are discussed with little special relation to the same species in the non-color part of the book, the double index is a real necessity. (A.W.H.)



DRY BLOCKS + WOOD =

A Useful Garden Table

by Alice M. Clark

IF you tire of putting away the cook-out utensils after an outdoor meal, the table illustrated here will enable you to keep them where they are used without upsetting the garden pattern. Because it is contrived of wood and concrete blocks, without mortar, this set-up is easily removed when no longer needed.

To the casual observer the table is just a handy place to display plants or serve refreshments, but it is also sturdy enough for youngsters to climb on, or jump from, in safety. As used in my patio, the low blocks at each end enclose and hide pint and half-gallon cans in which fluffy plants of *Begonia richmondensis* are more or less ever-blooming in both sun and shade.

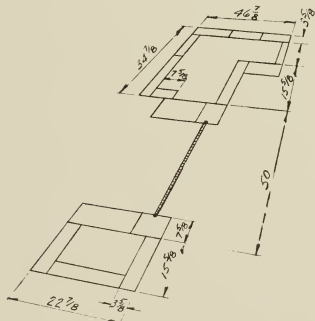
The top of the table can be made of 3/4-inch plywood or odd lumber. In

the latter case, a tarpaper lining will keep out moisture. The table top is 72 inches long. It overlaps the block base at one end but not at the other, because, in my case, the far space is occupied by a tree in a large container. Not shown in the sketch are the four 4x4" posts, the same height as the table, which are dropped into the concrete blocks that form the corners of the table base. A panel of 3/4-inch plywood slides into the grooved blocks in the front of the table to hold them steady. When the table top is nailed into the four vertical 4x4s, the structure is really secure.

There is ample storage beneath the table for two hibachis, charcoal, bellows, and cooking tools, on a floor raised 1 1/2 inches above the paving. A slip-out door, lined with a thin sheet of aluminum, fits the opening in the back of the table. The door is reinforced with two cleats that extend down enough to allow for the raised floor.

When the cook is ready for action, the door is lifted to the top of the table, metal side uppermost, to provide a fire-safe base for the broiler. It is also an easy surface from which to remove spattered grease. The cleats raise the work-top to a comfortable height.

The principle of using wood, instead of mortar, to hold concrete blocks in place, works equally well for benches, window boxes or planters. There is really no limit to the useful combinations that may be worked out.



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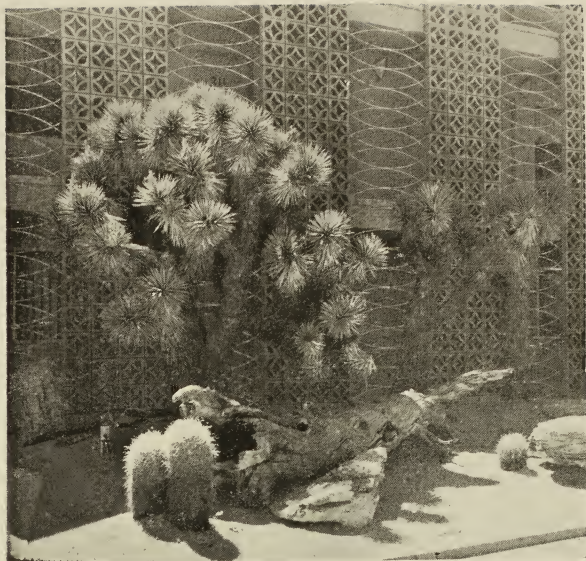
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JOSHUA TREES, barrel cactus, weathered wood and rocks form a desert scene in front of a Hillcrest apartment. (Ocotillo not shown.)

DESERT DWELLERS

. . . moved to San Diego

by Chauncy I. Jerabek, the San Diego Tree Man

EVEN though you may be unable to visit the real desert, you needn't deprive yourself of the sight of some real desert plants. A portion of the Lucerne Valley of San Bernardino County has been transplanted to San Diego for the landscaping of a new apartment building at 4166 Fourth Avenue in Hillcrest. Three notable species, Joshua Trees, ocotillo, and barrel cactus, are included in the plantings.

The tree-like, grotesque Joshua Tree (*Yucca brevifolia*) is represented by fifty or more specimens. Believe it or not, this plant belongs to the Lily family. In its native habitat it reaches 30 feet or more in height. Many have only a single trunk (young trees remain unbranched until they have produced flowers), while others may have an odd limb or two shooting off at a peculiar angle. The largest specimens have numerous contorted arm-like branches which generally form open crowns.

Trunks of the older trees are sometimes two feet or more in diameter, with a thick, rough covering of bark. The inner bark is made up of a thin, gauzy network of tough filaments.

Crowded at the ends of the angular, grotesque branches are 6-10" dagger-like, olive-green leaves with finely saw-toothed edges. Each season's leaves remain green for several years, at first standing stiffly, but gradually folding back against the limbs and trunk. These reflexed leaves form a dried thatch that acts as a protecting shield against the elements.

Great terminal panicles, a foot or more long, covered with nodding, greenish-white, lily-like flowers, appear at the extreme ends of the branches. The pod-like fruit which follows is the size of a large walnut. Although the flowers are beautiful, it is the scraggly, grotesque shape of the plants that attracts the eye.

It is sometimes interesting to note how plants receive their common

names. This yucca was christened "Joshua Tree" by the Mormon emigrants arriving in the valley of the Great Salt Lake some 114 years ago. Those settlers saw a suggestion of Joshua of the Bible in the yucca's outstretched arms, seemingly guardians of the desert.

The ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*) belongs to the Candlewood family and is closely related to the tamarisks. It is a woody plant which branches freely at the base and sends up many ashen-gray, stout stems to 6-15 feet. These whip-like stems are uniformly covered with short, stout spines, and for a short period, with small leaves. The tubular, fiery flowers, appearing at the tips of the stems, make this a spectacular shrub when in full bloom.

THE third plant, which with natural rock, sand and dried wood, composes this desert scene, is barrel cactus (*Echinocactus acanthodes*, also *E. cylindraceus* and *Ferocactus acanthodes*). As a young plant, it is globose, simple or branching at the base. As it matures, it becomes cylindrical and reaches six feet or more in height. Its numerous ribs are covered with hooked spines which vary in color from red to nearly white. The flowers, greenish-yellow in a circle at the crown of the plant, are not particularly showy.

I am no authority on soil culture of cacti and succulents, but I do know that they demand better soil than many people think. Although in their native state they appear to be growing in pure sand or in rocky places, upon examining them closely you will find the soil very rich. The barrel cactus is usually found growing out of crevices in rocks, but between the stones is a rich humus, formed over a period of years as dried leaves and other vegetation filtered in to create a coarse, porous soil.

In the case of the yucca, its own leaves fall and are mixed with other vegetation, driven by the wind, which clings to its spines. Along with waste material of desert animals, this vegetation decomposes and works itself into the soil around the roots, adding humus as well as fertilizer. The ocotillo is enriched in approximately the same way.

A Reader Reports . . .

For a valuable addition to dried arrangements, let stems and blooms of agapanthus (Lily-of-the-Nile) dry on the plant before cutting.

● Wrinkles Old and New

Don't worry about leaving your garden to go on vacation. The work will still be there when you return.

Let the presence of weeds be a comfort. If they won't grow nothing else will.

Gift tip for boss gardeners: Direc-

tor's chair with name stenciled across the back.

The bonus value of gardening lies in the fact that you can't do a good job of it while thinking about yourself.

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●GARDEN CHORES

Editor's Note: San Diego gardeners—newcomers especially—have been asking for this column ever since Ada Perry moved on to greener pastures as garden columnist for the Sunday *Union*. Pleased with her success there, and happy to have her column every week, some readers nevertheless have dropped the word that the artist who "cartoons" her might well be sued for libel.

IN cold climates, blissful winter evenings are reserved for thumbing seed catalogs for spring planting. There are no such restful periods here. Now, in our warmest weather, is the time to plant seeds for winter (which is really our spring), if we want newer or special varieties. If time is no problem, there is economy as well in "growing your own." You can sow calendula in the open ground. Try the soft pastel shades or the lemon-yellows and oranges, so gay on a dull day. Use poppies, alyssums, larkspurs and cornflowers in the same way for a spurt of color. Scatter wildflower seeds in vacant lots—if you can find them—in September.

Time for sweet peas, too. Buy Winter Spencers; winter and spring are the sweet pea seasons here. To get sun on both sides, plant away from house or wall, in a row that runs north and south. Dig the trench 16" deep, with six inches of steer and some bone meal in the bottom. Cover with six inches of soil. Put the trellis in place and have chicken wire handy to protect young seedlings from birds. Soak thoroughly the day before planting. Sow seeds about an inch apart, cover with two inches of soil, and shade with a cloth. Do not water again until plants appear, and then by irrigation beyond the trench. As seedlings grow, thin to six inches, and push the dirt in to fill the trench.

As a general rule, it is better to sow seeds in flats. Cover the bottom half-inch with wood shavings to promote drainage, then fill to the top with UC soil mix, especially compounded to offset our alkaline water. It's also sterile and lighter weight. Level the soil and soak the flat in water until moist on top, which will lower the soil level.

Sow the seeds as directed on the package. Scatter them thinly: fewer seedlings have more room to develop before transplanting. Mix very fine seeds with fine sand, and plant sparingly in a shallow earthen seed pan. The tiny seedlings must be pricked out into flats as they come along.

Since UC soil mix dries out faster than most, keep it moist with a fine spray. Better still, remove the bottom from a second flat and replace it with fine hardware cloth (rat wire). Reverse it over the seeded flat and cover the whole with any handy plastic. This will serve as a hothouse, but must be kept out of the sun. When seeds sprout, give dilute feedings at short intervals until seedlings are large enough to transplant into another flat with richer soil.

For color next year, take advantage of warm growing weather now to sow cinerarias, primulas, violas, giant candytuft, and *Alyssum saxatile*, a yellow-flowering rock plant, difficult to find in nurseries. There is no thrill equal to that of raising some glorious spikes of hybrid delphinium from the seed perfected by a famous California hybridist; it should be planted fresh in September. Unbelievable colors, rich as a stained glass window, can be had from a packet of polyantha primrose seed from the same firm.

Ready-grown seedlings at nurseries are as handy as prepared cake mixes. Buy plants of Iceland poppies for floating color over a long period. Coral bells, perennials with handsome low tufts of leaves, have the same charm in another color. Scarlet salvia, beloved of hummingbirds, and *Salvia azurea*, with tall blue wands, are dependable. Keep them pinched. The blue felicia daisy, Santa Anita, and *Aster frikartii*, are both spreading perennials that give cut-and-come-again color. White and yellow marguerites do the same.

Callas, spider lilies, freesias, amaryllis and Dutch iris are arriving. Get Watsonias and spuria iris for cutting. Snowflakes (*Leucojum vernum*) perform better here than snowdrops.

A New York woman came from her city apartment to a new home with a large lot in Clairemont. It was spring, and she went on a seed-buying binge, bringing home everything from C (car-

A Calendar

of

Care

nations) to Z (zinnias). She harvested a riot of color, all right, but she probably understands by now why seasoned Californians look to flowering trees, shrubs and perennials to carry the garden color—leaves them a little time for a dip in the ocean.

Crepe myrtles provide a fountain of color in warm areas. Select them in bloom; both they and the red-flowering eucalyptus vary in color. The latter, being tender, does better on the coast. For something different, invest in a parkinsonia tree. The strange green of limbs and stems is attractive in cold weather, and right now its lacy leaves and racemes of starry yellow flowers are ample compensation for its thorny nature. Don't overlook a tree-like shrub, *Vitex agnuscastus*, with spikes of blue bloom and fine-cut leaves. This Blue Chaste Tree is hard to find, possibly because its cold-weather stage is homely, but the flowering season is wonderful.

Have a field-day selecting your favorite colors in bougainvillea vines, oleanders and hibiscus. The latter wants the warmest spot in the garden, even against a white wall, but no wet feet, or frost in winter.

In a shady corner, ferns convey a

wonderful sense of coolness these warm days.

Crassula falcata, with blade-like foliage and flaming blooms, is a conversation piece wherever it grows, especially in containers.

Water, deep and long, especially for plants that will be deciduous, is the seasonal watchword. A mist spray will offset strong winds. Prune and fertilize lightly, except for tender tropicals. Dust and stake chrysanthemums; stop pinching them, but fertilize until the buds show color. Make cuttings of geraniums, pelargoniums and epiphyllums. Martha Washingtons root easily if sturdy, six-inch lengths are pushed into the ground, or even into pots, without removing any but the lowest leaves. Take up glads, dry in the shade, store in bags for two weeks, then put away in peat moss until needed. Transplant belladonna lilies after blooming. Divide bearded iris, shasta daisies and coral bells.

If you do not have a professional spray man (how they do pay off), consult your nursery for sprays for red spider, mites, mealy-bug and aphids, the Season's Special right now. Also ask for the material that kills crab grass seed before it ripens. Chlordane controls the lawn moth larvae.

Needless to say, Californians are chore-bound! Anyone for moving?

● ORCHIDS

LATE summer care of orchids boils down to a few simple rules:

1. June through October, feed with a balanced fertilizer twice a month.
2. Keep plants moist; drying out at this time will retard growth.
3. Watch out for hot, dry days; mist spray every hour or two to keep humidity up.
4. Be sure to leach out soil at every other watering to avoid build-up of salts.

Take a careful look at the outside of your orchid pots. If the pots have green moss or algae growing on them, it is a good indication that the plants are getting enough water and leaching. If the pot is clean, without much green, boost up the watering. If the pot is crusted with a whitish deposit, the soil is not being leached out sufficiently; repot into a clean pot, or scrub off the deposit; now set up a new watering program—water more often and use more water.

Betty Newkirk
SD Orchid Society



Thevetia thevetioides

ROLAND HOYT* RECOMMENDS

Thevetia

OF the two plants known as "Yellow Oleander," *Thevetia thevetioides* is slightly more at home in the coastal climate of Southern California than *T. nereifolia*, though it flowers earlier and more freely in the warmer, inland sections of the coastal belt. Both demand heat.

These South American natives get their common name from their similarity in general appearance to oleander. They are evergreen shrubs or small trees that should be pruned and handled with a full awareness of the toxic quality of parts, and especially the milky juice. Use them as a high espalier, whipped up tree-like, or set back among other shrubbery, to make them unavailable to children. The fleshy, black, one-inch triangular pods are especially attractive to the curious.

Leaves are long and narrow, of a very light, milky green. Those of *T. thevetioides* are markedly rolled under at the edge, with pronounced side veins to a mammoth nerve completely concealed beneath. They are downy on the underside. Foliage is relatively sparse, giving the tree or shrub an open character with little pruning or thinning.

The funnel-shaped flowers, of a rich, clear yellow, are about three inches long and up to four inches across, with the broad lobes twisted. In the tropics, blooms appear throughout the year. In our subtropical climate, the showy, full heads of bloom depend on warmer weather. In the Mission Hills section of San Diego, a specimen which flowered in June of 1960 was only beginning to show color in July this year.

*Member ALSA, author of Ornamental Plants for Subtropical Regions.

As long as warmth is assured, thevetia is not particularly choosy about growing conditions. Plant it in full sun in well-drained, sandy soil, and water generously. *T. peruviana* is slightly more frost-tolerant than *T. thevetioides*, though neither is recommended where frost is a problem.

The subject of frost might well be reviewed wherever tropics are grown out of doors. See to air drainage: this means high ground, or a place with sharply declining swales or a land tunnel to carry away cold air, which is heavier and seeks lower levels. These plants will show no inclination to become dormant, with the ensuing hardening process that helps withstand chill. The gardener can promote dormancy by withholding water and fertilizer sometime during late summer so that growth may be checked. The ground should be moist, however, as fall enters into winter, either from early rains or applied irrigation. This places plant cells in good fettle to give up moisture to frost and survive the period with minimum damage. A fine spray of water over a treasured plant in the early morning after frost may save it. Or if the plant has been set up against a warm wall, the stored heat given off through the night will help neutralize the cold.

It is my impression that *T. thevetioides* was introduced to Southern California sometime in the thirties by the late Hugh Evans. At least he had the first block of nursery stock of any size, and his generous dissemination, whether for money or for love, was the source of the plants that are now coming into flower and attracting so much attention.

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● DAHLIAS

WHETHER the gardener grows dahlias just for the flowers, or for exhibition, these are the months of colorful harvest.

More flower lovers would grow them and enjoy them, if they would pay less heed to the tales of "hard to grow" and "difficult to keep." None of the stories is true if the gardener gives average care—the same kind of attention needed for any cut flowers. Of course they have to be fed and watered and kept free of insects; but what plant doesn't?

As for keeping dahlias after they are cut, observation of one or two simple pointers will keep even the larger dahlias fresh for three or four days. Match that up with almost any other cut flower and it is obvious that dahlias are desirable, and not difficult.

The best time to cut them is late afternoon, the closer to dusk the better. If that is inconvenient, try early morning before the sun warms up. Be sure the blooms to be cut are "ripe" and fully open; flowers cut too green may wilt.

Carry a pail of air-temperature water right to the dahlia plant. Cut the stem at an angle, strip the lower foliage from the stem, and then put it in the water quickly. Foliage in the water will discolor and cause the water to sour.

If the pail of water is forgotten or impractical, keep the flowers heads down after cutting until you can get them to water. The object of both quick immersion and flower-upside down is to keep the moisture inside the hollow stem. If the water runs out, air rushes in and keeps the water out, causing the flower to wilt.

The water should be changed each day, with the dahlias held head down if they are kept out of water for more than an instant. During the changing process, it helps if a bit of the stem of each is snipped off.

Some arrangers dip their dahlia canes in hot water; others burn the ends. But, if the quick immersion system is used the flowers will keep just as long without all the bother.

In taking care of the growing dahlia plants during the summer, probably the most important thing is to see that they get plenty of water—not so often, but plenty of moisture at regular intervals. Soils differ, but a good gauge is to water deeply when the ground around the plants dries out.

Keeping the insects away is important, too. Just like other plants. In our part of the country we have to keep the red spider mites from getting started, as well as the horde of other crawling and flying pests. Regular spraying with malathion—once a week—is recommended. Using a mixture with kelthane, or any other miticide recommended by nurserymen, is even better.

Monthly feeding of dahlias with 4-10-10 or bulb food will keep them blooming until November.

Many gardeners dislike to disbud or disbranch any kind of plant. At the same time they are disappointed because their dahlias aren't as large as their neighbors'. The disbudding makes the difference. On the larger varieties, only the center bud should be allowed to develop, and the leaf sprouts should be removed at least two nodes down. For the real big ones, try keeping the canes down to four, and down to six for the mediums.

If you just want flowers, let 'em go. Feed, water, and spray, and the dahlia plants will do the rest.

Larry Sisk
SD County Dahlia Society

● BEGONIAS

THIS time of year calls for a high degree of watchfulness. The weather, very apt to be dry and hot, must be counteracted for begonias.

The soil in which the plants are growing must be kept damp. The surrounding areas should be dampened, also, since evaporation will make for a more humid condition. If soil seems damp enough, but the air is dry, wet down the paths and beds frequently. In drier areas of the County this may be necessary several times a day. Sprinkling of foliage would seem the ideal solution to a dry condition, but with the high incidence of salts in most of our water, it is very risky, since tip burn will almost certainly result.

With damp conditions, slugs and snails present a problem. Several methods are available to control them. There is a spray on the market that is quite effective; slug and snail bait may be used; and hand picking helps considerably.

Do not neglect insect control. A good all-purpose spray containing malathion should be used for mealy bugs, aphids, and the numerous chewers; chlordane will control the ants.

Maintain the usual feeding program,

as a healthy growing plant is a disease resistant plant. Re-pot as necessary.

A bit more shade might be beneficial during this period, but avoid over-shading. Leaf-color is the best guide.

Consistent care calls for the exercise of plain, old-fashioned common sense. The result? Satisfaction for both plant and planter.

Margaret M. Lee

● CAMELLIAS

ADEQUATE available moisture is the most critical need of camellias at this season. Buds for the winter crop of blooms are formed in summer. From the start they are highly sensitive to water stress. The plants may not reflect brief periods of neglect, but the maturing buds are easily injured. This shows up in the form of "bud drop" during the blooming season. Plants shed buds for other reasons, to be sure, but the principal cause is a period of drying out in the weeks between formation of the bud and the time for opening of the bloom.

Frequency of watering depends on the size and age of the plant, type of soil, mulching practices, amount of shade, and climatic factors. Container-grown plants are generally watered much more frequently than those field grown. The accepted rule is to keep the soil moist, but not soggy. Where water percolates through the soil readily, there is little likelihood of over-watering. Syringing the foliage off on a hot day adds to the humidity and is helpful, but it is not a substitute for providing adequate moisture in the root zone.

Other important cultural needs of the season include dusting or spraying to combat insect infestation, and taking corrective measures for ailing plants.

Aphids are usually the most serious pest. Points to watch are tender terminal growth and the undersides of leaves. Use an appropriate dust or spray according to label directions for camellias.

Snails and slugs are responsible for some leaf damage. These nocturnal marauders are easily controlled through the use of one of the snail baits available at all garden supply stores.

Chlorotic foliage is generally due to lack of available iron, a condition that may be remedied by using chelated or stabilized iron. Other causes of

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chlorosis are water-logged soil and an excess accumulation of soil salts. Several soil corrective products with a combination of ingredients including an acidifier, a soil penetrant, chelated iron and two other micro-nutrients are on the market today. Short of replanting or deep trenching to install drain tile and thus afford leaching of the soil and better aeration, use of one of these new products is the best way to restore an ailing plant to good health.

Clive Pillsbury
Pres., SD Camellia Society

• ROSES

IF you have followed a regular feeding and deep watering program for your roses, you have probably been rewarded with some healthy basal breaks. These are new canes from the bud union, with sprays of several flower stems at the top. It is desirable to let them grow as nature directs them. Treat them as you would a first year bush and merely break off spent blooms. In a manner of speaking, these new canes are "new bushes" which will give you your prize-winning blooms next year. For each new cane you will be removing one old cane when you prune next year.

Watch for blind growth and remove it. Blind growth is any side branch that stops growing (for no apparent reason). It will use nourishment, but won't produce flowers. Cut back to a lower leaf node and hope for better results from the next spurt of growth.

If, in spite of some extra nitrogen, you are still plagued with chlorosis (yellow leaves), it is advisable to flush out accumulated salts. Light surface irrigations tend to load the top few inches of soil with impurities from our Colorado River water. LONG overhead irrigation will tend to dissolve the surface salts and flush them down below the root zone. For continued benefit repeat such irrigations every few weeks through the heavy watering season.

Perhaps some mention should be made of the 1962 AARS winners. Some nurseries have them in cans for previewing. There are two hybrid teas, one grandiflora and one floribunda.

A French origination, named for the late Prince of Fashion, Christian Dior, is the most romantic and exciting sounding of the four. It bears very double flowers of crimson red, overlaid with iridescent scarlet,

which come on long stems with glossy foliage. "Peace" figures in its parentage. Christian Dior also has won four European honors. Conard-Pyle will distribute it in the United States.

"King's Ransom," being introduced by Jackson and Perkins, is a star in hybridizer Dennison Morey's crown. It is chrome yellow, very large with dense, dark green foliage. One of its parents is subject to various diseases, so this may be one to watch.

"Golden Slippers" sounds quite interesting. The buds are a combination of red, orange and gold, the plant is small, compact and hardy. Peterson and Dering will market it.

As a loyal Southern Californian, I chose to save "John S. Armstrong" until last. Named for the Founder of Armstrong Nurseries of Ontario, it is another child of that grand old lady, "Charlotte Armstrong." Herb Swim adds this one to his long string of credits. A grandiflora with dark velvety red blooms, "John S. Armstrong" is said to keep exceptionally well as a cut flower. The plant is tall, well-proportioned and sturdy.

Nettie B. Trott
SD Rose Society

• FUCHSIAS

AFTER the driest season in 110 years, it is a tribute to the San Diego climate that many flowers and gardens here are even finer than usual this year. Visitors from everywhere to our National Rose Convention were amazed at the beauty and quality of the roses, and could hardly believe we'd had less than 3½ inches of rainfall, about one-tenth the national average.

Fuchsias, despite their rain-forest origin, are particularly fine in quality and profusion of bloom in San Diego this season. The warm, equable winter, followed by quite cool weather (with morning fog) into July, has been just what they needed. Unhindered by the cold, stormy winter and spring that plagued much of the country this year, fuchsias here came early into such bounteous and beautiful bloom that the displays at the Del Mar Exposition were about the finest ever shown.

Of course, since the hottest part of the season is yet to come, regular and careful watering, fogging and feeding will be needed to keep plants up to par in such a dry year. Spraying the entire plant vigorously underneath, as well as above, will furnish a lot of protection against such pests as white

fly (which causes leaf-curl), red spider mite (causing defoliation), thrip (from dry grass nearby), leaf-hoppers, etc. But if pests are well started, water alone will be of little avail against them, and insect sprays, as recommended by the nurseries, will be needed. The mild ones are best for the plant, if they are effective. Most strong sprays drop or stop the blooms, and the plant will sometimes need extra care while recovering.

Most heavy-blooming plants will take a bit of rest between sessions of profuse blooming. It is not a good idea to feed or force them too hard, especially in a dry year.

We depend mostly upon a fish-emulsion base for feeding, three or four weeks apart (never closer together than two weeks), and perhaps one feeding of commercial fertilizer in the late summer. Force feeding, as with ammonium sulphate, for instance, may give sudden results, but usually will leave the plants exhausted and ugly, and shorten their lives too much to be recommended. Good fuchsia plants, properly cared for, have a surprisingly long life expectancy.

Remember the great importance, especially this summer, of shade from the hottest sun, and sufficient and frequent moisture, in both earth and air around the plants.

For those who may wonder about the "breath-taking beauty" we've mentioned from time to time, we suggest that you see some of the following varieties in full bloom: Ina Buxton, Florecent, Chas. Kuhn, Brigadoon, Tennessee Waltz, Desert Sunset, Pink Galore, Capri, Snowflake, Pink Quartet, Voodoo, Flying Cloud, Enchanted, etc., etc.

Morrison W. Doty
SD Fuchsia Society

50 YEARS AGO in CALIFORNIA GARDEN

Kate O. Sessions, August, 1911.— If you need a few eucalyptus for your back yard, hillside or canyon, or even a few on the back of the vacant lot next to you, set them out now. They will need water of course, but it will be a pleasure to watch them grow; they respond so quickly to the warm weather.

September, 1911.— A photograph submitted to the Garden by Miss Margaret A. Pepoon shows a rose geranium of the musk variety, a single plant about three years old, which measured thirty-seven and a half feet in circumference. When completely covered with blossoms it was a marvelous sight.

COMPOST

... the why and
the how

by Robert H. Calvin

Pres., Organic Gardening Club

THERE are six good reasons for making and using compost in the garden.

1. Compost improves soil structure by supplying the all-important humus so necessary for plant nutrition.

2. Because it increases the moisture-holding capacity of soil, it has been estimated that compost will cut water bills in half.

3. It prevents the leaching of soluble inorganic nitrogen because humus holds the nitrogen and releases it as the plant needs it.

4. Compost brings the pH of the soil nearer to neutral (pH 7.0) at which point phosphorus, the one nutrient least obtainable in a soil deficient in humus, is more readily available to growing plants.

5. Compost acts as a buffer to help balance the soil.

6. It adds nutrients, especially nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, as well as essential trace elements. None of the organic substitutes now on the market are as effective as compost in the soil.

The University of California has proven that it does not take a year, six months, or even 90 days to make compost. They found that compost can be made in 14 days if material is ground, provided it is turned every day. My method will produce finished compost in six weeks without the labor of turning the pile. There is some labor involved, of course, but compost is worth the effort expended. It has been rightfully called the "magic key" to a beautiful garden.

Most home owners will tell you they have no place in their garden to make compost. If that is true, it is time to redesign the garden and incorporate a work center with at least

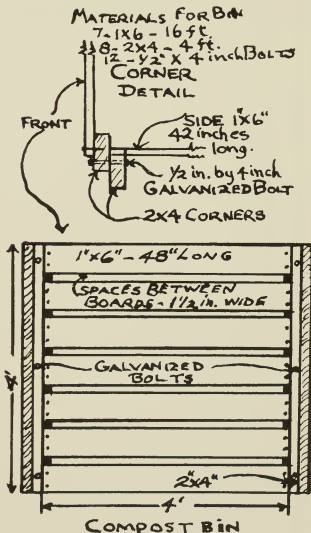
one compost bin and enough room beside it to stockpile garden wastes. The labor involved can be negligible if you follow the simple procedure outlined below.

Step 1 — Bin Construction

This bin method makes a better compost and takes up much less space. Make four panels of fir or redwood, 4 ft. by 4 ft., using 2x4s for the corners so that the four panels can be bolted together, and 1x6s horizontally with 1½ inch spaces between. Place the bin on the surface of the ground. When the compost is ready to use the bin can be unbolted and set aside until needed for the next batch. A shady spot for the bin is desirable, but not absolutely necessary. Bin proportions may also be 3'x3' by 4 ft. high.

Step 2 — Materials

Use weeds of all kinds, grass clippings (spread out and dried before using), spent annuals and perennials (be sure to let all green material wilt completely before placing in the pile), leaves (intersperse them throughout the pile), hedge clippings (no juniper or cypress), all garbage, other than bones and grease. It is usually possible to get spent annuals, grass clippings, etc., from your neighbors or from maintenance gardeners, who are generally glad to give you these materials instead of carting them to the dump. The finer you can grind or chop the materials, and the more varied they are, the better the decomposition. Keep a sack of steer manure on hand and



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Compost . . . continued

scatter a shovelful now and then over the preliminary stockpile. Water down occasionally. When there are two and one third cubic yards of material it is time to fill the bin.

Step 3 — Filling the Bin

The amount of steer manure to use for a batch of compost is seven sacks. If you used two sacks on the pile as it accumulated then use five sacks in building the pile. Use one shovel of steer manure to each three shovels of accumulated material as you fill the bin. When a depth of one foot is reached sprinkle one pound of cottonseed meal or granulated all-purpose fertilizer evenly over the layer and add about the same amount of gypsum. Water thoroughly (do not use a nozzle).

Repeat the foot-deep layers and water until you have completely filled

the bin. If you have enough material, keep going to one foot above the top of the bin. After the pile starts to heat it will drop two to three feet, depending on the materials you have used. Place empty paper sacks on top of the pile to insure a complete breakdown. Inspect the pile on the second day. If it has not started to heat it probably never will; it will be necessary to dismantle and reset the bin and refill it. It should then heat without fail.

Making compost is an interesting and rewarding undertaking. Anyone with a wee bit of thrift will find real satisfaction in turning his garden and kitchen wastes into a valuable fertilizer. When you see the remarkable change that takes place in your soil and the response of the plants, you will feel that the effort expended was very little indeed when measured against the results.

Potpourri

. . . people, places, products in the news

• Rotary Club Project

The San Diego Rotary Club has selected the improvement of Alcazar Garden, Balboa Park, as its 50th Anniversary project. The garden, built for the 1935 Exposition as a replica of a garden at Alcazar Castle, Seville, Spain, lies south of El Prado.

Fountains, walks, sprinkler system, and the summer house, all in varying stages of disrepair, will be renovated by the club in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Department. Stephen G. Fletcher is project chairman.

Rotary officials have expressed the hope that their action will spark plans for similar improvement projects among other San Diego clubs.

• Blooming Balboa Park

August

Mall—Petunia, Ageratum
Alcazar Garden—Petunia
Palisades Area—Marigold, Ageratum
El Prado—Begonia
South of Organ—Oleander
Botanical Bldg. — Gloxinia, Coleus,
Begonia, Caladium
Formal—Dahlia, Canna

September

Alcazar Garden—Petunia
El Prado—Begonia
Formal—Roses
Botanical Bldg. — Gloxinia, Coleus,
Begonia, Rubra Lily

• Miss Sessions Honored

The memory of Kate O. Sessions was honored at ceremonies in Pacific Beach on July 7. Her nursery site at Pico and Balboa, and the Tipuana tree she planted there, were declared a State Historical Landmark.

The Pacific Beach Woman's Club sponsored the observance, at which a bronze plaque was dedicated. Rep. Bob Wilson acted as master of ceremonies. Dr. Ralph Roberts spoke on the life of Miss Sessions.

• New Cactus Club

Newly-organized last spring, the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Club will welcome new members and guests at its monthly meetings, held on the first Saturday at the Youth Center in Lemon Grove. For further information, contact President C. Hardin (HO 9-3038) or Secretary Mrs. H. B. Caulk (CY 5-8540).

• SDFA Honoree

Miss Alice Mary Greer became the tenth honorary life member of the San Diego Floral Association in ceremonies at the organization's annual meeting in June. Mrs. John G. Clark, similarly honored last year, made the presentation.

Other living honorary members are Mrs. C. P. Tedford (Annie Robinson), Roland S. Hoyt, Ethel Bailey Higgins, and Chauncy I. Jerabek.



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California

"AND THE DESERT SHALL BLOSSOM..."

SHE was beautiful, they say, very beautiful, and San Diego was drab. The hills overlooking the blue harbor were brown in 1883. She had come as a teacher, but the school room couldn't hold her. San Diego, she saw, was a garden waiting to be planted.

The town had only one gift to offer — climate. Work and water and greenery had to be supplied. Gardens and parks had to be made by man, or more accurately, by a woman, for the young lady in the picture had more to do with their creation than anyone else.

She stepped out of the classroom and into a life-long love affair with her chosen city, an affair in which she created living ornaments to bedeck her beloved San Diego, and San Diego in its turn covered her with honor.

SOON, her influence could be seen everywhere, as if she had cast an enchantment over sage brush and bid it blossom as the rose. From nurseries in Coronado, Balboa Park, Mission Hills and Pacific Beach she broadcast trees and flowers over the city and its surrounding settlements. She ranged from Bonita north to Rancho Santa Fe, from the coast to Lemon Grove and Helix, offering plants and guidance, and a gospel of beauty to transform the scattered pieces into one glorious landscape. Scarcely a garden lacked her touch, then or now.



Can you imagine San Diego without its twisted junipers? She was the first to recognize their windswept charm and to use them as ornaments in the dooryards of the city's habitations. The common ice plants became her magic carpets. Hillsides glowing with their brilliant colors seem as much at home in San Diego today as a Bokhara in a drawing room, but they were rare and precious treasures when she began importing them from Africa, a rainbow she collected to embellish her barren town.

PEOPLE talk about her as if she were still alive: she was tough, they say, argumentative, impatient; but also gentle, affectionate, dedicated. She occupied a special chair at Floral Association meetings, and no one has been found to fill it since she left. In the picture above, she looks as if she might be dressed for her first ball, but San Diegans remember her in all-purpose suits and floppy hats and heavy work shoes. You can't tame a desert in a ball gown.

She planted San Diego, and it blossomed abundantly. It was bare when she arrived and green when she departed. By then, she was the drab one, but her city was beautiful, very beautiful. Who was she? Kate Olivia Sessions, of course.

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(From *THE ENCHANTED GARDEN*, program of the 1961 Charity Ball. The Ball is presented annually as a benefit for Childrens Hospital.)